



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
MICHIGAN BROADBAND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & ECONOMIC GROWTH  
DAVID C. HOLLISTER, DIRECTOR

JAMES W. BUTLER, III  
VICE PRESIDENT

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Contact: Paulette Porter  
(517) 241-2121

## **Affordable High-Speed Internet Coming to Muskegon Area Low/Moderate Income Families**

**Broadband Service Providers Urged to Submit Proposals for Grant Monies**

LANSING --Today the Michigan Broadband Development Authority (MBDA) announced that Muskegon County is the first in Michigan to pilot a new broadband grant program to provide affordable high-speed Internet service to low- and moderate-income families.

"Muskegon is helping to span the digital divide by implementing this grant program that will make high-speed Internet service a reality for low- and moderate-income families in their region," said Department of Labor & Economic Growth Director David C. Hollister. "We urge interested broadband service providers to submit proposals."

Broadband service providers interested in participating can learn more about the program and how to submit a proposal by going to the county's website at [www.co.muskegon.mi.us/digitaldivide](http://www.co.muskegon.mi.us/digitaldivide)

The new Digital Divide Investment Program (DDIP) was created by a grant approved by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in Washington, D.C. The new program will begin with pilot locations in Muskegon and Marquette Counties.

Earlier this summer, Governor Granholm announced that Michigan was the first state in the nation given approval to use federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to support large-scale deployment of broadband infrastructure. Muskegon is one of two pilot locations that will use its CDBG monies to facilitate and test the implementation of this new program. The program combines MBDA loans with CDBG dollars and is intended to make broadband service more affordable for low- and moderate-income households throughout the entire county.

DDIP is a collaborative program supported by the Michigan Broadband Development Authority, the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) -- all agencies within the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth. If trials prove successful, the state intends to replicate the program in other communities across Michigan.

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